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Security Council

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New York

President:	Mr. Berrocal Soto	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes Da Rosa
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/1997/966)

97-86794 (E)

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The meeting was resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Marzuki (Malaysia): Mr. President, my delegation is pleased to participate under your able chairmanship in this formal meeting of the Council to consider extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF). Malaysia recognizes the important role played by the IPTF in promoting civil security by working closely with the parties to achieve the fundamental reforms in law enforcement institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We therefore welcome the extension of its mandate by this Council. Malaysia is privileged and honoured to be part of the IPTF in implementing its important tasks as outlined in annex II of the Dayton Peace Agreement. We call on the international community to provide the IPTF with the necessary financial and material assistance so as to enable it to carry out the additional tasks assigned to it by the London and Bonn Conferences of the Peace Implementation Council.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the men and women from various countries serving under the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and the IPTF and other international organizations who have contributed so significantly to the current peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to offer our condolences to the families of the 12 dedicated officers who lost their lives in a tragic helicopter crash last September.

Thanks to the presence of the multinational force, a relatively safe and secure environment has now prevailed. Important efforts towards building a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina have begun to take root. The common State institutions have been formed and are functioning, albeit inefficiently. Increasing numbers of the displaced Bosnians are beginning to feel confident enough to return to their homes. At the same time, the international community has made a significant contribution in the reconstruction efforts, helping to put Bosnia and Herzegovina back on its feet economically.

However, we are concerned that serious obstacles continue to impede the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Mutual mistrust and animosity among the different ethnic groups continue to obstruct efforts towards realizing the ultimate objective of making peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina an irreversible process. We wish to remind the parties concerned that there is no viable alterative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for building lasting peace and prosperity in a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious Bosnia and Herzegovina. The attainment of this goal requires the full commitment of the Bosnian leaders themselves. They all must be willing to take bold steps towards establishing a multiethnic State within its internationally recognized boundaries, with fully functioning common State institutions that command the support and confidence of the people.

When the parties accepted the Dayton Peace Agreement two years ago, they made a contract and a commitment to, *inter alia*, respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is therefore imperative that they keep their commitments, including ensuring that all the joint State institutions are duly constituted and functioning efficiently and effectively, and that all the attributes of a sovereign State are fully bestowed on Bosnia and Herzegovina to enable it to take its rightful place within the family of nations. In this regard, the Bosnian entities must work strenuously towards resolving the problems now confronting the State, from the issue of appropriate State symbols to the question of the currency and to various laws that need to be passed by the parliamentary Assembly.

My delegation believes that a durable peace can be guaranteed in Bosnia and Herzegovina only through reconciliation among its people on the basis of the principles of justice and the rule of law. It is therefore imperative that the perpetrators of the horrendous crimes against humanity in Bosnia and Herzegovina be made to face the consequences of their past actions. In this regard, we are seriously concerned that many of the indicted war criminals, including the most-wanted indictees, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, are still at large and continue to exercise political influence and leadership in the Serb entity. Their continued freedom constitutes a major obstacle to the efforts to create a lasting peace in a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the long-term prospects for peace are not to be undermined, they must be immediately apprehended and brought to trial before the Tribunal established for this purpose in The Hague. The trial and appropriate punishment of those guilty of the heinous crimes against humanity are indispensable in bringing about national reconciliation, on

which so much of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina depends. My delegation believes that SFOR has a critical role to play in apprehending these indicted war criminals. In this regard, we commend the courageous action of SFOR in arresting the two indicted war criminals.

To his great credit, the President of the Tribunal, Judge Antonio Cassese, in presenting the Tribunal's fourth annual report to the General Assembly last month, was forthright in singling out the Serb entity and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as the parties that have repeatedly refused to cooperate with the Tribunal. We view their refusal to recognize the authority of the Tribunal established by this Council as a direct affront to the Council and the United Nations as a whole and one which should not be allowed to continue with impunity.

My delegation is concerned at the continued violations of freedom of movement and at the harassment, destruction of property and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and political affiliation that occur in many areas, especially in the Serb entity. This has hampered the safe return of refugees and displaced persons, and only a quarter of the estimated 2 million refugees and displaced persons have been able to return, most to the areas in which they belong to the ethnic majority. It is essential that all the relevant agencies, including SFOR and the IPTF, provide the necessary support to the High Representative and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the successful implementation of the return programme, particularly with regard to minority returnees, who have thus far encountered political, security and administrative impediments. Clearly, the success of the return programme is critical to the realization of a viable Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the peace implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina enters its most critical stage, it is imperative that the relatively safe and secure environment created by the presence of the multinational force be maintained and further consolidated to ensure that all the efforts and resources invested so far will bear the desired results. The international community cannot take the risk of withdrawing the multinational forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina at a time when State institutions are still weak, suspicions and mistrust are still very much in evidence and indicted war criminals are still free and exercising influence and authority in the background.

In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the ongoing discussions on the future role of the international peacekeepers after the expiration of the SFOR mandate in June 1998. We hope for a final consensus on this vitally important issue and are encouraged by some positive developments in that direction. We welcome in particular the decision of the United States to extend the role of its forces in SFOR. We consider a continuing military role by the United States as pivotal to the viability of the international peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that the further presence of an international force is necessary, and, as a troop-contributing country, Malaysia will be prepared to engage in consultations on that subject.

Clearly, there is a need to build confidence, understanding and friendship among the ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina so that it may be able to sustain the process of national reconciliation. For this purpose, Malaysia is prepared to make a modest contribution by organizing a series of informal forums or workshops with the participation of Bosnian groups and individuals and international experts and facilitators. With the support of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malaysia proposes to convene this forum in Malaysia soon. We believe that, given its unique multi-ethnic, multilingual and multireligious background and experience at nation-building, Malaysia can make a positive contribution in this area. While the international community will continue to assist, the main responsibility for carrying out the tasks of nation building ultimately lies with the Bosnian people themselves. Only when they earnestly and sincerely carry out their commitments under the Peace Agreement will the peace settlement be truly achieved and the peace process irreversible.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Slovenia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Mr. President, I wish to begin by expressing our sincere appreciation of the fact that this meeting of the Security Council is taking place under the presidency of Costa Rica. The role of your country in international peace is exemplary, and we believe that it is most fitting and symbolic that the discussion and the search for durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is taking place under your presidency. We are sure that this month of December will be successful for the Security Council.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be a matter of international concern. While some progress has been made in the implementation of

Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, as noted in the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is obvious that further sustained efforts of the international community are indispensable to stabilize the situation and to make the peace process irreversible.

There have been some developments that should encourage our common effort for peace. The Peace Agreement concluded two years ago has been an important achievement in itself. It stopped the war and opened the path towards preservation of the independence, sovereignty, legal continuity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The implementation of the Peace Agreement has established the lasting cessation of hostilities and represents important progress in the domain of arms reduction. The efforts of the High Representative have gained wide international recognition and support. A plethora of international organizations, financial institutions and non-governmental organizations have contributed to various aspects of the efforts to achieve economic reconstruction and a durable peace.

Slovenia has actively joined these efforts. Recently, it assumed further responsibility by becoming member of the Stabilization Force (SFOR), and we are cooperating closely with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in contributing to various options for the post-SFOR operation. In addition, Slovenia is in the process of establishing an international fund for demining and for assistance to mine victims.

The international concern for the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been most clearly expressed at the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997. The Peace Implementation Council reaffirmed that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for political and economic reconstruction in Bosnia. The vital contribution of the multinational Stabilization Force in providing a secure environment for the implementation of the Peace Agreement has been widely recognized. The Peace Implementation Council confirmed an emerging consensus on the need for an international military presence to continue beyond June 1998. This remains indispensable for any progress in the peace process in the future, and we welcome the recent decisions in that connection.

The message of the Peace implementation Council is clear: The responsibility for consolidating the peace rests primarily with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The immediate neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina are expected to take a constructive approach to achieving this end and must assist in the endeavours for peace. Finally, the international community has to take a robust stance towards all the major problems impeding the peace process.

These messages were echoed and strengthened in resolution 52/150 on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted by the General Assembly earlier this week on 15 December. Slovenia is gratified that the resolution was adopted by consensus, which clearly reflects the unity and resolve of the entire international community to work together for a just and durable peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the removal of all obstacles that still impede that process.

Among the impediments to peace, some are obvious, as are the measures to expedite their removal. Stricter measures are needed to remove the war criminals from their positions of influence over decision-making and to transfer them for trial to the international war crimes Tribunal. The efforts to secure compliance with the orders of the Tribunal have to be supported and the courage of those involved in such efforts, including the most recent, have to be commended. The Security Council should encourage further efforts to bring the criminals to justice and enhance the effectiveness of the Tribunal, which the Security Council established in 1993. This would not only strengthen justice as a value in itself and safeguard the credibility of the Security Council, but would also create important conditions for the success of the peace efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Security Council should also render its political support for the voluntary repatriation of refugees and for the removal of obstacles which hinder the process of repatriation. Harassment of the returnees, intimidation and killings designed to discourage the voluntary return of refugees must be stopped and, if that becomes necessary, the Security Council should consider specific measures against those responsible for such acts.

The return of refugees is also vital for the proper functioning of the elected institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the restoration of the ethnic diversity that has always represented the essence of the identity of the country. Therefore, it is essential for the very existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and united country. The need to prevent attempts to undermine the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina or to achieve domination by a single group over the common institutions will be best met by ensuring

the restoration, to the largest extent possible, of the ethnic balance in the country. The basic guarantee to achieving this is to ensure the necessary level of security of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a requirement which could gradually lose its centrality in the peace process, in accordance with the overall progress. However, it is of central importance now and every effort must be made to strengthen it. A continued international military presence and the strengthening of the police component are the main pillars of a secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We support the suggestions of the Secretary-General concerning the strengthening of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) monitoring of police activities with a view to effectively dealing with problems like corruption, smuggling and financial crime. One important area of these activities is also the functioning of the border-control police units.

In addition to providing a secure environment, the multinational Force should also take an even more active role in supporting the Peace Agreement and those who implement it. On the other hand, the Force should take active steps against those who oppose the Peace Agreement or refuse to comply with its provisions. The multinational military and police forces need to play a role in apprehending the indicted war criminals and in clearing the obstacles to the safe and voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

The success of other aspects of the peace process will, to a large extent, depend on the completion of these tasks. In this area, we see the primary challenge for the High Representative. We therefore welcome and support the strengthening of his mandate, in accordance with the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference.

Let me conclude by saying the following: The efforts of the international community so far have brought some important progress in the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We should renew and reinforce our commitment to pursuing this process further and rendering it irreversible.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Slovenia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Çelem (Turkey): At the outset, my delegation would like to commend the Costa Rican presidency and the Security Council for scheduling an open debate on this very important subject at this crucial stage. We expressed our views in depth on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the General Assembly in the debate under agenda item 47 three days ago. Therefore, I will be brief.

It is noteworthy that considerable progress has been made in implementing peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the signing of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement. The fact is that, since the signing of the Peace Agreement, considerable progress has been achieved in the military field. Nonetheless, lack of compliance on some crucial civilian aspects of the Agreement indicates that the task undertaken by the international community is far from complete. As accurately reflected, most recently in the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference of 9 and 10 December 1997, the fragility of the situation in the country compels us to maintain a stable security environment. The Secretary-General's reports of 8 September and 10 December 1997 and the latest report of the High Representative for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina all point to the fact that the peace process has not yet become irreversible.

In this respect, I would like to reaffirm Turkey's full support for the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto. They constitute the basis for the establishment of a durable and just peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to heal the wounds of the war and to attain lasting peace, it is incumbent upon the international community to exert every effort to help Bosnia and Herzegovina in its arduous endeavour for reconciliation and reintegration. Turkey, along with other States, is actively participating in the implementation of both the military and civilian aspects of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and is ready, on its part, to continue doing so.

With its resolution 52/150, the General Assembly recently reiterated its full commitment to the stabilization and consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and reconciliation among its constituent peoples. We welcome this unanimous decision reaffirming its concern about non-compliance with the peace agreement and demonstrating its willingness to take the necessary measures in its power to obtain full implementation. For this purpose, it is essential that all the conditions

envisaged by the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement — *inter alia*, cooperation with the International Tribunal, the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes and the establishment of common institutions — materialize without delay.

It is not possible to overstate the importance of the work of the International Tribunal for the process of reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey supports fully the efforts of the International Tribunal aimed at the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991 and believes that States and parties to the Peace Agreement must meet their obligations to cooperate with the Tribunal.

The conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina held in Bonn drew particular attention to the failure of the authorities of the Republika Srpska entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to carry out their obligations. It is the duty of the international community to exert the necessary pressure on the parties which do not live up to their legal obligations of cooperating with the Tribunal. At this juncture, it is important to recall that, under the Dayton Accord, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is responsible for the Serbian entity's cooperation and compliance, as well as its own.

Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), the Sintra Political Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council and, just recently, the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference all confirmed that international economic aid is conditional upon compliance with and implementation of the Peace Agreement. In this regard, we would like to stress the need for timely information about the level of cooperation and compliance so that necessary assessments can be made.

Turkey welcomes the positive steps taken towards a normalization of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, there is ample room for progress in this respect. Therefore, we call upon the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to fulfil immediately the requirement of establishing full and unconditional diplomatic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that such a development will provide the necessary tool to remove some of the existing hurdles on the road to normalization.

Turkey also welcomes the successful conclusion of the local elections of 13 and 14 September 1997. We expect full and unconditional implementation of the election results. Any attempt not to implement them will hamper the delicate process underway.

Economic revitalization is essential for the process of reconciliation, the improvement of living conditions and the maintenance of durable peace, both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. However, we are dismayed that the package of essential legislation establishing the common institutions of economic management has not been implemented in full; nor has the State-level legislation specified in the Sintra Declaration been adopted. We hope that necessary steps will be taken immediately, so that Bosnia and Herzegovina can have an economic policy framework which would allow it to start taking advantage of the multilateral economic assistance already available. As urged by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on 7 December 1997, the international community must disburse expeditiously the funds pledged for the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Implementation Force (IFOR) has played a crucial role in preserving peace and order and in ensuring progress on the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey believes that the Stabilization Force (SFOR), as the successor to IFOR, has been indispensable for the maintenance of a stable security environment essential for deterring or, if necessary, halting a resumption of hostilities. We welcome the emerging consensus on the need for a military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue beyond June 1998. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his last report,

> "Much has been achieved, but much also remains to be done." [S/1997/966, para. 45]

At this volatile stage of the peace process, it is essential that the international community continue to exert itself persistently in order to achieve a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Turkey for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Hungary. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Erdös (Hungary) (*interpretation from French*): Hungary welcomes this discussion in the Security Council of the activities undertaken by the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the tasks that remain to be completed in order to implement the decisions made in the framework of the Dayton Agreement. We note in particular the importance of the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held recently in Bonn, which emphasized building on the achievements of the peace process, continuing international assistance and strengthening the role of the High Representative.

Hungary, which neighbours the Balkan region, is profoundly attached to a political settlement of the issues of conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. It is also attached to the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of all the other successor States of the former Yugoslavia. We reject vigorously the proposals that have been made here and there suggesting the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a solution. It is not necessary to dwell at length on the possible negative repercussions of such destructive ideas.

We welcome the determination of the international community to proceed on the track of carrying out the civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement. We also welcome the intention of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina for an additional period. Hungary joined the peacekeeping operations in 1996 by opening a base for the Stabilization Force at Taszár, in the south of our country, and by sending a logistical contingent of 500 people, which last year was able to rebuild 20 bridges used for railway and surface transportation. That contingent also began demining operations in the immediate vicinity of those bridges. This year the contingent is continuing its reconstruction activities without interruption, in order to facilitate the resumption of normal economic and commercial life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Likewise, my country has participated in the operations of the International Police Task Force since it was created and at the beginning of this year again increased the number of its personnel serving in the Force.

Nevertheless, we note that the efforts made to improve the economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina could be accelerated further if the necessary economic legislation were implemented and if the functioning of the central bodies were made more effective. It is harmful for Bosnia and Herzegovina that the laws which are absolutely necessary for the recovery of the country's economic life have not yet been approved by the competent bodies because of differences in views, a lack of confidence or the absence of political will.

Nor can we fail to underscore the importance of reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for if peace and political and economic stability are not accompanied by the corresponding psychological changes in the citizenry, the situation in the country will remain fragile and the results of the peace process may be reversed. Administering justice, monitoring respect for human rights — including the rights of minorities — education, spreading the values of democracy and a free press could contribute greatly to this process.

We note with satisfaction the arrest in Bosnia and Herzegovina of two more individuals accused of war crimes. We encourage the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Stabilization Force to continue their activities in this sphere, while emphasizing the need to secure the full cooperation of all three communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and of neighbouring countries as well, so that the number of those brought to justice will accurately reflect the true dimensions of the atrocities committed there. It is time we remembered the bitter lessons of this bloody century of ours, recalling the words spoken at Nuremberg in November 1945 by the United States judge Robert Jackson:

(spoke in English)

> "The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated".

(spoke in French)

One might well wonder how many times the horrors of the past will have to be repeated. The parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the immediate neighbours of that country must also shoulder their share of the responsibility in efforts to reject vigorously aggressive nationalist, racist and ethnocentric theories — theories

that in fact contributed greatly to kindling the inferno in the former Yugoslavia.

We are convinced that in spite of the difficulties and the passage of time, the international community must not turn away from the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and must maintain its civilian and military presence in that country. Here, Hungary welcomes yesterday's announcement on this matter by the President of the United States, and is prepared to continue to contribute to reaching the objectives of the Dayton Agreement. The Security Council can play an enormous role in the uniquely complex endeavour aimed at restoring normalcy to this sorely tried country.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): It gives me special pleasure, Mr. President, to take part in this meeting under your leadership. It is by coincidence that I had the honour today to transmit to the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations my foreign ministry's agreement to the appointment of the first Ambassador of Costa Rica to Ukraine.

Looking at the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina after more than six years of United Nations involvement and two years after the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed, the international community can feel some sort of relief and cautious optimism concerning the future of that country. Despite the problems and the persistent difficulties on the road towards the establishment of a democratic, multiethnic State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we cannot deny the remarkable progress that has been made.

There is no doubt that it has been achieved thanks in the first place to the efforts of the parties to the Peace Agreement. However, the process could have been much more difficult had it not been facilitated by the continuous assistance of the international community. It is also true that, despite signs of overall improvement, the present situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as that in the whole region, will continue to require agile efforts.

The Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn earlier this month demonstrated once again the existence of a strong international commitment to the process of reconciliation and nation-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The international community must concentrate on preventing the political development of the country from moving in a direction contrary to the Peace Agreement. In this regard we should remove the temptation to use military force and the fear that the latter will be used. Ukraine shares the view that the Stabilization Force (SFOR) authorized by Security Council resolution 1088 (1996) continues to be an important element in securing the first outcomes of the ongoing process of reconciliation and State-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in contributing to the stabilization of the situation in the Balkans.

We believe that the continued military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be limited by specific time limits, but should be measured by the progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. This presence can only ensure the concentration on the political, economic and social issues and challenges that is so desperately required.

Therefore, my delegation fully supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), which includes the International Police Task Force (IPTF), to pursue the work entrusted to it in accordance with annex 11 of the Peace Agreement. With this in mind, my country stands ready to extend its participation in a feasible post-SFOR operation to be mandated by the Security Council beyond June 1998.

The delegation of Ukraine is convinced that the role of the United Nations in the process of reconciliation and civilian consolidation in Bosnia remains indispensable. At the same time, inasmuch as further success in implementing the Peace Agreement depends largely on the fulfilment of its civilian aspects, the United Nations role in the solution of the humanitarian problems should be increased. In our view, the issues of demining, economic reconstruction, human rights, the return of refugees and law enforcement are of special importance. The proper coordination of humanitarian efforts between the United Nations bodies in the field and all other international structures involved, including the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, non-governmental organizations and others, as well as between SFOR and the IPTF, will be extremely helpful to that end. As no agency has the lead in the field of human rights, further coordination among the various organizations dealing with different aspects of this problem is also necessary.

Demining still represents one of the serious obstacles hampering the effective implementation of the civilian aspects of the Agreement. There is no doubt that the solution of this problem would substantially contribute to the return of refugees, increased freedom of movement and the economic reconstruction of the whole country.

As one of the contributors of personnel to the IPTF, Ukraine notes with satisfaction that the Force has become more assertive in focusing on enhancing freedom of movement, police training and protection of human rights. A high level of cooperation between the IPTF and SFOR on the ground has proved to be very effective and should thus be further developed.

The progress reached under IPTF guidance in police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina is also remarkable and commendable. At the same time, we are of the view that the multifaceted process of implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton accords, in particular police reform in the Federation and the Republika Srpska, should acquire a more integrated character. Future progress cannot be achieved in one sphere without being complemented by relevant measures in another. We therefore share the view that police reform in Bosnia necessitates adequate changes in the country's whole judicial and penal systems.

It will be difficult to achieve final success in the peace process in Bosnia unless the process is supported by effective economic reconstruction in the country with the continued assistance of the international donor community. Top priority should be given to projects aimed at promoting economic cooperation between the Federation and the Republika Srpska, as well as within the Federation itself. Both multiethnic entities and the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with all other peoples residing in the country, should equally enjoy the advantages of economic recovery, including international financial aid.

In this context, I should like to stress that all these practical measures aimed at improving everyday life should be guided by the need to build confidence and mutual trust among the multi-ethnic entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

However, the primary responsibility for building a viable democratic society as well as lasting peace and reconciliation lies with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This will become a reality only with the full implementation of the Peace Agreement by the parties themselves, since it is up to them alone to define the destiny of the country.

Finally, my delegation would like to join previous speakers in paying special tribute to those who have tragically lost their lives in the name of peace and a better life for the Bosnian people. I should like also to take this opportunity to confirm Ukraine's steadfast commitment to the cause of peace in Bosnia in the pursuit of a secure and prosperous future for that country and in the Balkans as a whole, which, hopefully, has come closer during the past year.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): Canada is pleased to participate in this meeting of the Security Council in its consideration of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF).

Canada is pleased to continue its support for and contribution to the IPTF in Bosnia. The IPTF is the largest international police mission ever fielded. Its existence is an indication of the increasing importance of the role of civilian police in peacekeeping operations. Civilian police provide the transition from military to civilian authority, from peacekeeping to peace-building. In democratic societies, there is a security covenant between the government and the people. This covenant is still fragile in Bosnia, hence the role for the international military and civilian police forces. The military provides space between factions, and the police mission provides monitoring and training for local forces, so that democratic institutions can take root.

Democracy and national reconciliation depend on the rule of law. The establishment of a capable, professional and motivated multi-ethnic Bosnian police force is key to achieving that goal.

Canada supported the call for a strengthened IPTF for Bosnia at meetings held in October and December 1996 in Paris and London. That support was reinforced at meetings of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council in Istanbul, Sintra, and, last week, in Bonn. The IPTF has begun to show results. Throughout Bosnia, it is carrying out rigorous weapons inspections, reducing the number of illegal checkpoints

and applying pressure to ensure that joint police uniforms and vehicles are used. It has also started a restructuring and training programme with the Republika Srpska police. However, it will take some time for training in the rule of law and in democratic, community-based policing to have some effect on ingrained attitudes.

(spoke in English)

Canada is pleased that the training component of the IPTF's role is now expanding. This is all the more reason for careful coordination between training agencies, the United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) and IPTF contributors. We would welcome an update on the training programme which discusses its effectiveness and future plans.

The IPTF faces structural challenges inherent to any large United Nations mission. It could be more effective if there were better screening and training of international police before deployment. Improved administration and a clearer chain of command would also enhance the IPTF's capabilities. In addition, it must work with small groups of civilian police who arrive in Bosnia with different training backgrounds and capabilities, and who are then placed in mixed units in isolated police stations throughout the country. Despite the evident difficulties, this approach offers, of course, the opportunity for civilian police to exchange training methods, and demonstrates to the local population that multi-ethnic policing can be effective.

The IPTF's mandate, role and, indeed, its very existence in training and monitoring are linked for the foreseeable future to the continued presence of a military stabilizing factor — currently the Stabilization Force (SFOR), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and authorized by the United Nations Security Council. In order to gain the confidence of all parties, the IPTF must be unarmed. However, the ability of the IPTF to call on SFOR is equally important in carrying out its operations. Recent successes with regard to investigations, removal of roadblocks, weapons inspections and prison monitoring would not have been possible without backing from SFOR to enforce IPTF requirements.

Recently, some have suggested that there may be a gap between the mandates of SFOR and the IPTF which should be filled by armed police. This might be better characterized as an attitude gap. SFOR and the IPTF have unique and mutually supporting responsibilities for establishing sustainable security and the transition to peace-building in Bosnia. However, and this I emphasize, we should not lose sight of our goal: reinforcement of the capacity and willingness of the local police and Government to fully assume their responsibilities within a context of peace. These are their responsibilities, which we urge them to assume and exercise. We, the international community, must avoid the temptation of displacing these authorities. This would send the wrong message, and the underlying local conditions would remain unchanged.

In a related effort to empower Bosnian authorities, the United Nations will shortly begin transferring the authority of the Mine Action Centre to the local government. This is a significant responsibility which Bosnian leaders will need to address seriously. The scourge of land mines is very real in Bosnia and will require new leadership on the part of Bosnian politicians from all sides. For its part, Canada provided the largest in-kind contribution of demining experts of any participating nation to the Mine Action Centre from April to September 1997, and continued to provide personnel until just recently. We expect we will also provide personnel to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre next year.

In another related effort, as part of the international community's drive for justice and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada announced the day before yesterday an additional financial contribution of $600,000 and five additional crime analysts to the International War Crimes Tribunal to support its work of exhuming mass graves in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Close cooperation between the IPTF and SFOR in recent months has been effective in implementing the Dayton peace agreements and in ensuring that local police function effectively. SFOR and the IPTF must continue to combine their efforts, taking action in a coordinated and creative fashion, using their respective strengths as part of a long-term commitment by the international community.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Luxembourg. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia,

Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union wishes first of all to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Kai Eide, for the tireless efforts that he, his deputy and the other members of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular the members of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), have made to assist in the establishment of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Special Representative, Ms. Elizabeth Rehn, and to assure her of our full cooperation and assistance in the discharge of her important responsibilities.

The adoption without a vote by the General Assembly on Monday, 15 December 1997, of the resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a clear message of support for the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the part of the international community.

The European Union wishes to recall that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement, which is the foundation for the political and economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two multi-ethnic entities. The process initiated two years ago has been characterized by the fact that it has been possible to implement efficiently the military aspects of the agreements. Furthermore, the international community has launched a substantial effort to rebuild infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Full respect for human rights and the rights of minorities is closely linked to the restoration of a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina, with institutions operating in full respect for the rule of law and in conformity with universally recognized principles of justice.

One of the most delicate areas, which remains a determining factor for the return to normality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the training of police forces. Indeed, a great many refugees and displaced persons, including those from regions in which they were members of minority groups, have still not returned home for fear of acts of intimidation and violence. Administrative and legal measures must be taken immediately to put an end to such acts. If these measures are to be implemented promptly and without discrimination, action by a police force imbued with democratic principles is essential.

The European Union welcomes the progress made in the two entities in restructuring the police thanks to the tireless activities of the International Police Task Force. In particular, we wish to welcome the disbandment of the special units, the re-entry into the regular civilian police of some qualified members of those units and the creation of mixed police patrols. Furthermore, we wish to underline the importance of organizing in the territory of both entities courses on respect for human dignity and on the role of the police in a democratic society, as well as the importance of reopening and developing police academies to ensure the training of police in accordance with democratic principles.

Improved cooperation between the IPTF and the local police, in the context of promoting freedom of movement between and within the entities, and with the assistance of the Stabilization Force, has enabled many illegal checkpoints to be dismantled. The number of checkpoints has been considerably reduced, and we wish to welcome this positive development.

The close cooperation between the International Police Task Force and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) made it possible to hold orderly local elections on 13 and 14 September 1997 and for the Assembly of Republika Srpska on 22 and 23 November 1997. This cooperation bodes well for the general elections scheduled to take place in 1998 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To this end, the reform of the media must be successfully completed so that they can operate in a democratic and pluralist manner. The multi-ethnicity of the parties needs to be developed.

The European Union wishes to pay tribute to the work carried out by other divisions of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular the Civil Affairs division, the Human Rights Office and the Office of Press and Information. Furthermore, the European Union wishes to underline the importance of the Mine Action Centre, which will be called upon to continue to play an essential role in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1 January 1998, with the implementation of the Agreed Principles for Demining, which have been agreed upon by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While 1997 has seen real progress, further efforts will have to be made in such diverse areas as the re-establishment of security, the bringing to justice of those responsible for war crimes, the establishment of a free press, the return of refugees and displaced persons,

economic rehabilitation and the holding of local elections. It is true that the results achieved will remain fragile if further progress is not made soon. It is obvious that much more could have been achieved had the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed fully to the construction of a civic and democratic society in the country. As we enter the third year of implementation of the Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period, major efforts are still needed to ensure the functioning of viable structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities. The European Union is concerned about the fact that the central Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina operates without any organic law, secretariat or fixed headquarters. The Assembly has met only five times since its election last year. The central budget is not funded by the entities, which withhold customs revenues or do not collect them. Large sums are being managed without the necessary transparency and outside the legal process. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has neither a flag nor a common currency.

The Peace Implementation Council met in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997 to examine progress made since the London Conference on 4 and 5 December 1996 and the Sintra Ministerial Meeting. The European Union welcomes the convening of the Bonn Conference and fully supports its conclusions. We hope that the decisive impetus given to the peace process during that Conference will be complemented by the full cooperation of all the parties concerned.

We fully support the High Representative in the difficult discharge of his duties. This action, as well as that of the international community, remains indispensable in the foreseeable future. Our ultimate aim is a Bosnia and Herzegovina with an impartial administration that is finally capable of governing itself and living within borders respected by its neighbours.

The European Union reaffirms that it will not tolerate attempts within the entities to undermine the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, nor will it tolerate attempts by any group to dominate the political institutions of that country.

The European Union would remind the neighbouring countries of their obligations under the Peace Agreement. These obligations must be fulfilled in their entirety, voluntarily and immediately.

Furthermore, we would recall that in the framework of its regional aid, the continuation of the European Union's international assistance is linked to full compliance by the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and by the neighbouring States with the Peace Agreement as well as all subsequent obligations.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): Italy associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg.

We strongly support the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn from 9 to 10 December 1997, which sets the stage for further progress in the peace process in Bosnia. Since the last Peace Implementation Conference in London, and thanks also to the tireless efforts of the High Representative and his office, it is fair to say that progress has been made.

To consolidate these achievements and make the peace process irreversible, the international community should take a careful look at the future. It is now up to the parties to show renewed determination to respect the commitments they have freely entered into, and work toward the full stabilization of the country and the region. In this respect, we note that, thanks also to the action of the High Representative, earlier this week the Bosnian parliament adopted two of the three laws agreed upon in Bonn. We also welcome the provisional entering into effect of the law on citizenship.

In our view, improvements are needed in the following areas.

First, the common institutions must function properly. The elections held in Bosnia since 1996 have favoured a trend toward a more pluralistic political scenario. Consequently, the enhancement of political, civil and media freedom, and the establishment of pluralism in opinions and political parties must become priority objectives. The ultimate goal should be political stabilization through a continuing series of democratic elections supervised by the international community.

In this context, respect for human rights and the rule of law are the basis for all societies that intend to grow towards prosperity and development. We trust that the parties will commit themselves to protecting and

promoting these basic rights and be firmly committed to ensuring respect for them in every sector of society.

Secondly, fostering good relations with and between neighbouring countries is crucial to the implementation of the Peace Agreement. But special relationships between the entities and other countries should be in full compliance with the Dayton Agreement. In this context, I would like to recall Italy's assistance to the Bosnian Presidency of the Central European Initiative in 1997, which only a few weeks ago successfully organized this year's summit in Sarajevo.

The maintenance of an international military presence in Bosnia after the Stabilization Force (SFOR) mandate expires in June 1998 is essential to ensuring security and stability in Bosnia and the region. Italy therefore welcomes the consensus that is emerging on this need. We are ready to work with our partners on identifying the best possible options. We believe that a presence led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) continues to be necessary and must have as broad a participation of countries as possible. In this regard, we warmly welcome the announcement made yesterday by President Clinton that the United States will keep its troops in Bosnia. Let me also stress that nobody, nobody can deny the extent of Europe's current commitment, both in military and economic terms. Italy, which is contributing many troops to SFOR, will certainly continue to play its part, also in the eventual multinational follow-up force.

My country is one of the major contributors of emergency assistance and reconstruction aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We believe that an effective use of reconstruction funds may prove crucial to fostering and consolidating peace. Aid must be used as a catalyst to ensure genuine reconciliation. Economic assistance should also be seen as a way to encourage democratization in the whole region. Conditionality does not mean penalizing or discriminating against one or another party: it means encouraging everyone to take a positive attitude towards the peace process. These criteria should be applied to every aspect of the peace process, such as respect for human rights — how fundamental is respect for human rights, especially there — the return of refugees, media restructuring, and the fight against corruption.

Another essential aspect of the peace process is full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. It is our strong hope that the parties will translate their commitments into effective and concrete collaboration.

The Council is in the process of renewing the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is playing a crucial role in stabilizing the country, especially the restructuring of law enforcement institutions, through the International Police Task Force (IPTF), to which Italy already contributes personnel and to which it intends to allocate additional funding. In the context of the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia, the IPTF has the essential function of reassuring the civilian population and paving the way toward national reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to expand the Force's areas of operation to key public security issues, such as financial crime, smuggling and corruption, and judicial reform. The IPTF's activities are of a long-term nature. We share the Secretary-General's assessment that this progress is still fragile, and therefore the Mission's engagement in Bosnia will be needed for a long period to come. In this regard, we agree that future security arrangements should be carefully considered since they impact on the IPTF's ability to function effectively.

Italy fully supports the draft resolution before the Council, which it co-sponsored.

To conclude, allow me to assure the Council that my country will continue its commitment to contribute to international efforts aimed at restoring peace, security and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region as a whole.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Simonović (Croatia): Since I have already elucidated Croatia's general views on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the General Assembly debate on Monday, it is my intention to limit my comments today to the role and the results of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia as they relate to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I wish to emphasize that Croatia assigns special significance to the International Criminal Tribunal and its work. Indeed, my country was instrumental in the Tribunal's establishment. When it was ultimately established in May 1993, one of its primary aims was to

contribute to peace by dispensing justice. This laudable aim is not adequately reflected in the results to date.

Croatia does not condition its cooperation with the Tribunal upon the reciprocal cooperation of any other country or entity. Croatia has always considered cooperation to be its legal, political and moral duty. We believe that all other countries should have the same attitude towards the Tribunal.

Due to its limited capabilities in comparison to the magnitude of the crimes committed, it is apparent that the Tribunal can only carry out its work in a selective manner. Therefore, discretion in deciding which crimes and perpetrators to pursue carries significant weight. Croatia cannot be wholly satisfied with the exercise of this discretion to date.

International sources have estimated that Bosnian Croats and Muslims are responsible for about 10 per cent of all the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the conflict, while Bosnian Serbs are responsible for about 90 per cent. Yet, at this moment, Bosnian Croats represent 73 per cent of those in the custody of the Tribunal. Furthermore, in spite of ample evidence, no indictments are forthcoming for the crimes committed against Bosnian Croats. The Croatian Government maintains its insistence that the Tribunal must take action in respect of these crimes.

The Tribunal's objective of dispensing justice, in which my country and Bosnia and Herzegovina have placed much hope, cannot be achieved if the present pattern is maintained.

Concerning the recent arrest of two Bosnian Croats, we wish to affirm that it is partly in order to avoid the risk associated with the use of force that the Republic of Croatia has encouraged the voluntary surrender of indictees. Moreover, while the arrests are based on international law and are within the scope of the mandate of the Stabilization Force (SFOR), they have brought to an even higher level the already existing disproportion of detainees, in terms of the involvement of their ethnic group in war crimes.

While this debate proceeds, the architects of ethnic cleansing walk freely in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Republika Srpska. General Mladic attends sporting events in Belgrade, fraternizing with other former and present senior Yugoslav army officers, some of whom are responsible for the atrocities committed in Vukovar. Radovan Karadzic gives interviews for foreign television from Pale, where he pulls the strings in Republika Srpska. Milan Martic, who ordered the shelling of Zagreb and is indicted by the Tribunal for that crime, lives in a villa in the immediate vicinity of SFOR headquarters in Banja Luka. We should ask ourselves, what kind of message does this send?

There is no doubt that the responsibility for war crimes is always individual and that all perpetrators have to be brought to justice. At the same time, due to its limited resources, the Tribunal cannot prosecute all perpetrators. Therefore, it is essential for the peace process that the Tribunal in its future work better reflect the level of involvement and degree of responsibility of the different sides in the conflict. The fact that it has not so far done so detracts from the achievement of justice and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Germany. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rudolph (Germany): At the outset I would like to state that Germany fully supports the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Ambassador Wolzfeld, on behalf of the European Union.

The latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) shares the analysis of the Peace Implementation Conference hosted by Germany on 9 and 10 December 1997 in Bonn: namely, progress has been made, but many steps are still to be taken towards a self-sustaining peace, lasting reconciliation, tolerance and democracy.

We firmly believe that the importance of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of civil implementation of the Peace Agreement can hardly be overestimated. In close cooperation with the Stabilization Force (SFOR) troops, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the other international organizations and agencies present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations personnel, and in particular the police officers of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), face the unique challenge of serving both as monitors and partners in dialogue of the local authorities in order to establish a stable, non-discriminatory environment of law, order and tolerance.

This engagement by men and women from 40 countries deserves our respect and our full support.

A lasting, self-sustaining security and police structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the confidence of the citizens of all three constituent peoples, cannot be established by international decree; it needs the cooperation of the local authorities. The absence of war can be imposed by international troops, but reconciliation has to root in the peoples' hearts and minds.

We share the Secretary-General's observation that UNMIBH should increase its contribution to the peace-building process in an even more effective way, within the limits of the current mandate, as outlined in Annex 11 of the Dayton Agreement. While the monitoring continues, the training programme for the local police will be enhanced. Specialized education and training by international experts, particularly in fighting economic crime and corruption, will help not only to expand the capacities of the local police, but also to limit the illegal profits of those opposing the peace process.

Our increased input of international experience and police skills in order to support the police of Bosnia and Herzegovina in fighting crime and maintaining public security will remain ineffective without a democratically legitimized judicial system that guarantees fair investigations and trials as well as acceptable circumstances of detention. The international legal assistance should be welcomed by all the parties as a chance, not as interference. Last week's request of the High Representative's Supervisor in Brcko to review the privatization programme of the Republika Srpska shows the intention to work out adequate regulations in a joint effort.

Germany therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's intention also to increase the efforts of IPTF in the area of judicial reform, as well. Germany is the second largest police contributor to IPTF, having provided 166 well-trained and experienced police officers. Germany has also provided a prosecutor and other experts. We have extended invitations for training courses in Germany to Bosnian police officers. My Government is now considering ways to meet the request contained in both the final document of the Peace Implementation Conference and the Secretary-General's report, for more contributions in the form of training, funds and equipment.

UNMIBH and IPTF cannot operate in Bosnia and Herzegovina without the necessary security arrangements. At present, a secure environment for United Nations personnel can be guaranteed only by the international military force. In our opinion, the current distribution of responsibilities between IPTF and SFOR has been effective and has met the challenges. The civilian and military international engagement are mutually reinforcing. Only a successful civilian implementation under the protection of the military forces can lead to a self-sustaining peace that may finally make an international military presence unnecessary.

But while UNMIBH — like SFOR, the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and many more — stands ready not only to continue, but to enhance its efforts, all authorities of the central Government and the two entities must know that they themselves are responsible for achieving reconciliation, stability and democracy. The support offered by the extension of the mandates of UNMIBH and IPTF must be met by their full compliance with the Peace Agreement and subsequent obligations. These commitments include, in particular, cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Germany welcomes the arrest of two more persons indicted for war crimes by members of SFOR on Thursday night. The operation in Vitez underlines once more the resolve of the international community to bring the indicted persons to trial in The Hague. If justice is not brought to Bosnia and Herzegovina, peace and reconciliation will remain a distant goal.

At the Bonn Conference, it was clearly pointed out that the patience of the international community is not unlimited. Those who ignore or boycott their obligations to cooperate, in particular in the joint Presidency, should know that time is not on their side. Therefore, the Peace Implementation Conference strengthened the position of the High Representative. Germany welcomes the first use of his new competences on 16 December, when the High Representative imposed new legislation on citizenship, effective 1 January 1998, after the Federal Assembly failed to come to an agreement.

I want to close by expressing our gratitude and deep respect for the work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Kai Eide, and his staff, who can claim credit for the successful work of UNMIBH and IPTF thus far. Ms. Elisabeth Rehn has all our best wishes and support as she takes over Mr. Eide's task to work towards establishing a lasting and self-sustaining peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great honour to take part in this debate under your presidency, Sir. You fittingly represent a country that has played a key role in the successful achievement of peace in Central America and that has for a long time been an example of good government for the entire hemisphere.

Argentina participated in the Security Council's adoption in 1995 of the first resolutions designed to implement the General Framework Agreement for Peace, which was initialled in Dayton on 21 November of that year. In our view, any assessment of the process that began there must take into account the contrast between the prevailing scepticism of that time and today's relative optimism.

It is true that much remains to be done. A fully functioning central Government, the practice of good government, the return of refugees and displaced persons to their places of origin, the exercise of freedom of expression, cooperation with the International Tribunal and the holding of municipal elections are some of the matters that must be addressed as soon as possible. The difficulties they present should not be cause for discouragement, nor should they justify delays that jeopardize areas of agreement or long-term objectives.

We are encouraged by the description in the Secretary-General's report of the progress made in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially as regards the functioning of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, specifically, the fulfilment of the mandate of the International Police Task Force. The United Nations and all the agencies mentioned by the Secretary-General that are involved in implementing the Peace Agreement deserve our fullest confidence so that they can successfully continue their difficult task.

We fully support the initiative to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also hope that the International Police Task Force, which is part of that Mission, will have the necessary military support to carry out its functions during the period of its mandate.

We would like to express our special appreciation for the work being done by Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and by Mr. Manfred Seitner, Commissioner of the International Police Task Force. At the same time, allow me to express my gratitude to all the countries that, in various ways, are contributing to this delicate mission. Argentina is honoured to have been part of the International Police Task Force since its inception and will continue to participate as long as is necessary.

Allow me to say, as we approach the conclusion in this important debate, that what has happened in that region and its consequences can be only partially rectified by the tools available to this Council. We therefore believe that every avenue of solidarity and assistance must be pursued, in order to return as much hope as possible to those who have suffered so much.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Argentina for his kind words addressed to my country.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution (S/1997/989) to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1144 (1997).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour to participate in this meeting under your able guidance as President and in light of the leadership shown by your country in this and in many other issues.

(spoke in English)

The action of the Security Council today to approve the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force (IPTF), demonstrates our continuing commitment to peace in the region. Since yesterday, we have assembled to debate in open session on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a little more than two years after the General Framework Agreement for Peace was signed. We face many challenges ahead, but our debate has highlighted the impressive level of accomplishment thus far and should give us a renewed sense of hope and resolve, however tempered by the difficulties before us now.

Most importantly, a stable military environment exists. Stockpiles of armaments are being reduced, and the Standing Committee on Military Matters is helping to bridge the gap between former adversaries. Thanks to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR), the threat of war has receded, affording the parties the opportunity to make peace and to build a stable and democratic society. The presence of these international armed forces is the biggest factor contributing to implementation of the Peace Agreement at the current time.

Despite lingering memories of war and conflict, the seeds of reconciliation are growing. With the assistance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), democratic elections have been successfully held for all levels of government, and new governmental institutions are beginning to function. National institutions have been established, and Federation joint institutions are formed and operating. Although municipal election results are being contested in some areas and implementation can be slow, multi-party democracy is beginning to take hold in Bosnia. While many of these institutions and structures may not yet function fully or independently, the fact that they exist and provide a potential forum for joint decisions and policy-making was inconceivable to many just last year.

Meanwhile, economic prospects are brightening. In the Federation, the gross domestic product is rising and unemployment is falling. International reconstruction assistance has made great strides in rebuilding infrastructure, providing electric power, utilities, housing and schools. Progress is being made on an integrated telecommunications system, and airports in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar are being opened to civil air traffic. We hope that increased cooperation on implementation of the Peace Agreement in the Republika Srpska will soon allow more international assistance to be made available in that entity as well. Assistance from the international community must remain conditional on compliance with the Peace Agreement and subsequent obligations.

Despite the encouraging signs, we cannot deny that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina — and the international effort to assist them — continue to face daunting odds. While there has been progress on common institutions, more is needed. The leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina must do more to make economic revival self-sustaining. Return of refugees and displaced persons also has not been as rapid as we would like, even though it is perhaps the key element of the reconciliation and rebuilding effort. On this issue in particular we must make a concentrated and concerted effort, on an urgent basis. While more than 400,000 refugees and displaced persons have returned home, four times as many were displaced by the war. Moreover, the remaining returnees are mainly those from areas in which they are "the minority" group and where they face even greater obstacles to their return. If we fail to support the right of refugees to return home in safety, we accept and legitimize the results of ethnic cleansing and brutality on a scale which has no place in the late twentieth century. Even worse, we create the conditions for a new cycle of displacement and conflict which will threaten lasting peace in the region.

Our focus on reconciliation also means political and material support for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and continuing the pressure for the surrender of all persons indicted by the Tribunal. While gratified by recent improvement in cooperation with the Tribunal by some parties, and strongly supporting recent SFOR actions in this regard, we reiterate that other parties' failure to cooperate can mean only continued isolation.

The full establishment of independent media throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina is also a pressing priority for reconciliation efforts.

Another essential factor in the reconciliation process and the rebuilding of civic life is the International Police Task Force, which we have just addressed. The IPTF has made valuable contributions to the retraining and restructuring of local police and in helping to achieve significant improvement in freedom of movement. Increased and enhanced international contributions to the IPTF are needed, especially in providing monitors with

specialized qualifications, and we warmly welcome the pledges that have already been made in this regard. Police reform is critical for all aspects of Dayton implementation, including refugee returns, freedom of movement and good governance. We strongly support the recommendations made at the Peace Implementation Conference in Bonn to restructure the IPTF to provide maximum support to the most pressing civilian implementation needs, particularly the creation of specialized units to train Bosnian police to address more effectively key public security issues.

The meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held in Bonn last week demonstrated that the international community remains unified and resolute in its efforts to help the parties create lasting peace in the region. The Council reinforced the authority of the High Representative in the broad range of responsibilities related to civilian implementation of the Peace Agreement. We strongly support the important initiatives taken by the Peace Implementation Council to ensure that the civilian implementation effort has adequate authority and sufficiently robust mechanisms to function assertively and decisively, especially when addressing the serious problem of corruption.

For our part, we will remain actively engaged with NATO allies and SFOR partners in considering options for the multinational follow-on force to SFOR to provide a secure environment for civilian implementation in Bosnia beyond June of 1998. It has become clear that continued progress in Bosnia necessitates a follow-on military force, led by NATO, after SFOR ends. In that light, President Clinton yesterday announced that the United States can take part in a security presence in Bosnia when the multinational Stabilization Force withdraws this summer, to enable intensified civilian and economic efforts in the region to proceed in an atmosphere of confidence.

My Government agrees with the Secretary-General's view that the future of the IPTF is closely linked to the continued presence in Bosnia of a NATO-led peacekeeping force. It therefore makes sense that further extensions of the IPTF's mandate should be considered only when the details of what will follow SFOR become clearer. That is why we have supported a six-month extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the debate on an SFOR follow-on force moves ahead, we expect that IPTF will assume as much responsibility for public security as it can. We should all be thinking about how IPTF can play a more effective role in pursuing our shared goals. My Government has made a number of suggestions to improve IPTF's performance under its current mandate. We believe these should be implemented, especially those related to reform of personnel policies. We do not claim a monopoly on good ideas, however, and we welcome suggestions from other IPTF contributors and the Secretary-General.

We have not pressed for changes in IPTF's mandate in the context of this renewal. However, a prolongation of the status quo is not acceptable. We have not foreclosed the option of changing the mandate in the future if that would help to improve IPTF's effectiveness. In the meantime, we look forward to a constructive dialogue with our United Nations partners on how to maximize IPTF's contribution to peace and stability.

I would also add that my Government believes that changes, for now, can be kept within existing financial resources. Our vote in favour of this resolution should not be interpreted as authorizing any increase in costs for the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, we join in expressing our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative and all the international personnel serving the cause of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We remember, in particular the victims of the 17 September helicopter crash. Their sacrifice and those of many, many others in the years since the war began strengthen our resolve as we continue our efforts to ensure a just and lasting peace in the region.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to my country.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.